

## Letter from J.T. Barker to Alexander Graham Bell, December 27, 1909

December 27/09, Hadjin, Turkey in Asia Dr. Alexander Graham Bell, Washington, D.C.  
U.S.A.. Dear Sir:

Ever since we left our little deaf daughter, Grace Elizabeth Barker, in Miss Reinhardt's home in Kensington, Md, it has been our purpose to write and express our heartfelt thanks to you.

When we know it was our duty to go back again to our post in Turkey, we were confronted with the problem of what to do for our afflicted child. It scarcely seemed right to take her back to live in Hadjin, where she would have no advantages whatever, for a period of years. She was yet too young to be sent to the Belleville Institute, and none of our relatives felt properly situated to take upon themselves the care of a deaf child. Our allowance as missionaries would not admit of our placing her in such an ideal place as she is now in, and at times we wished we might stay in America and care for our children.

On the other hand, the need of the mission field called us. The massacre in the province of Adana, where we are stationed, had left our station sadly short of workers, and the few remaining, tire-out missionaries who were holding the fort, could hardly our wait our arrival, and would have felt it too much altogether if we had tho't only of ourselves, and left them in such straits after the terrible days they had passed through.

Mr. Maurer, our only male missionary, was one of the two Americans killed. Two of our best native workers had been slaughtered, and while Hadjin was not massacred, you probably read how the city was besieged for two weeks, the inhabitants not knowing what moment they must surrender, for even the 1st band of soldiers sent to protect them joined the attaching party.

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The 5 American ladies alone in Hadjin with the natives, scattered in three different institutions, decided, in spite of persuasion to the contrary, to stick to their posts, for they feared that since they were afraid to kill foreigners, it would mean leaving the poor Armenians to mercy of the blood-thirsty mob, and they did even tho' one end of the city was set on fire. Marvellous to all those who know Hadjin, the fire failed to spread, and went out, tho' no one dared go near to extinguish it, and at the last moment, when it seemed there was no other way but to surrender, help came.

The whole city felt indebted to the missionaries for the stand they took, and realizes that had the missionaries sought their own safety in the hour of extreme danger, the city would have been in ashes, and they butchered, with wives and daughters carried off to Turkish harems, as was the case with more than 200 in the city of Adana.

All this, with the no less strenuous weeks that followed, when the missionarie had to listen constantly to the heart-rending tales of those who came for help or to have their wounds dressed, was a terrible strain. Miss Lambert, the matron of our Orphanages, broke down afterwards, and was just recovering from an attack of typhoid when we reached Hadjin. She is now in Hadjin Egypt trying to recuperate.

After all this you can well understand how selfish it would have been to have tho't only of ourselves, so we began to make preparations to return with our three children. Just then, Miss Reinhardt's letter stating that she had decided to offer the scholarship you had granted the school, to our daughter, was forwarded to us, and we felt deeply humbled to think that while we were seeking to obey our convictions of duty, sometimes with a heavy heart, as we thought of our deaf darling, our Heavenly Father was planning it all out that while we sought the path of duty, our little daughter was to have the best the world affords in the way of advantages for a deaf child.

The letters from Kensington are indeed very comforting.

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Since our arrival in September, our 16 months' old baby, born in Toronto, has succumbed to the measles, leaving us and her 6 year old sister very lonely.

The epidemic of measles that has been raging for a few weeks, has taken a very severe form, and hundreds of children have been swept away by it.

We are all kept very busy. In addition to my regular work, serving on relief committees, and organizing relief work for the wretched poor about us occupies my time.

We get only a snatch of news here and there, as to your late successes in which we are deeply interested.

Trusting that 1910 will see your highest hopes realized, we remain

Respectfully Yours,